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Trends and Variations in First Births to Older Women, 1970-86

June 1989

US DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Public Health Service
Centers for Disease Control

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Vital and Health Statistics

Trends and Variations in First Births to Older Women, 1970-86

Series 21
Data From the
National Vital Statistics System
No. 47

Trends and variations in first-time childbearing by women in their thirties and older are presented for the years 1970-86. The report focuses on the decline in childbearing by women in their twenties, particularly well-educated women, and the extent to which these women have delayed motherhood. Maternal and infant health characteristics are also discussed. The information presented is drawn from the live birth certificates of all States and the District of Columbia.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Public Health Service
Centers for Disease Control
National Center for Health Statistics

Hyattsville, Md.
June 1989
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Symbols

- - -	Data not available
. . .	Category not applicable
-	Quantity zero
0.0	Quantity more than zero but less than 0.05
Z	Quantity more than zero but less than 500 where numbers are rounded to thousands
*	Figure does not meet standards of reliability or precision (see Technical notes)

Trends and Variations in First Births to Older Women, United States, 1970–86

by Stephanie J. Ventura, A.M., Division of Vital Statistics

Introduction

First births to women in their thirties have increased substantially since 1970, doubling, tripling, and quadrupling their levels in a 16-year period. Throughout the 1970's, the increases were largest for women aged 30–34 years (NCHS, 1982). Since 1980, the impact of this phenomenon has shifted to older women. Between 1980 and 1986, the increases in first births and first-birth rates were much greater for women aged 35–39 years.

The number of first births to women aged 30–34 years rose from 42,404 in 1970 to 112,964 in 1980 and then to 181,504 in 1986. Increases in births to women aged 35–39 years were also substantial, although the numbers are considerably smaller: 11,704 in 1970, 18,241 in 1980, and 44,427 in 1986 (table 1).

The first-birth rate for women aged 30–34 years increased from 7.3 births per 1,000 women in 1970 to 12.8 in 1980 and to 17.5 in 1986, an overall rise of 140 percent. The rate for women aged 35–39 years rose from 2.1 in 1970 to 2.6 in 1980 and to 4.7 in 1986, an increase of 124 percent (table 2).

During this period of rapidly rising first-birth rates for women in their thirties, rates for women in their teens and early twenties were declining.

The first-birth rate for women 15–19 years of age fell 23 percent, from 53.7 per 1,000 in 1970 to 41.4 in 1976, with the decline proceeding at a much slower pace during the rest of the 1970's and early 1980's; the rate for 1986 was 39.1 (table 2). Similarly for women in their early twenties, the first-birth rate dropped rapidly through the mid-1970's, from 78.2 in 1970 to 52.9 in 1976, a decline of 32 percent; since 1976, the rate has fluctuated between 52.4 and 57.3.

The trend in the first-birth rate for women aged 25–29 years has followed a middle course between their younger and older counterparts. The rate fell 6 percent from 1970 to 1972, then increased 33 percent during the years 1972–81, from 29.2 to 38.8. The rate has changed very little since 1981; in 1986 it was 38.8.

The first-birth rate for women in their early forties has been very low throughout this period and was relatively unchanged until 1980. From 1980 to 1986 the rate increased from 0.3 to 0.6 first births per 1,000 women in this age group. As a consequence of these varying shifts in first-birth rates by age of mother, women aged 30 years and older are accounting for a much larger share of first births in the mid-1980's than in 1970: 15 percent in 1986 compared with 4 percent in 1970 (table 3).

The increases during the early 1970's in first-time childbearing by women in their thirties occurred at the same time that there were steep reductions in higher order birth rates or, to put it another way, a decline in large families. In the 5 years from 1970 to 1975, rates for fourth and higher order births for women aged 30 years and older fell by about one-half. As a consequence of these declines and the slowly increasing first-birth rates, the overall birth rate for these women dropped during the early 1970's, from 73.3 to 52.3 for ages 30–34 years and from 31.7 to 19.5 for ages 35–39 years (table 4).

The reversal of these declines beginning in the mid-1970's is associated entirely with the sizable increases in first-birth rates, while higher order rates continued to decline but at a slower pace. Higher order births comprised a much smaller proportion of all births to women aged 25–39 years in 1986 than in 1970 (table 5).

Clearly large numbers of women have reached age 30 years and older without having had their first child. For example, one-fourth of all women aged 30–34 years at the end of 1986 were still childless. However, national data from the June 1987 Current Population Survey indicate that only 10 percent of women in their early thirties expect to remain childless (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1988a). The question that remains is to what extent those women who intend to have children will actually have the children they expect to bear. Related data from the National Survey of Family Growth conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) indicates that many of these women may ultimately remain childless because of physiological impairments in their ability to conceive and bear children (Mosher and Bachrach, 1982). These impairments tend to rise sharply with age. Until those women now in their thirties have reached the postchildbearing ages, it will not be possible to say how much of today's delayed childbearing will be made up.

Trends in first-time childbearing by age have been affected by changes in the female population of childbearing age and by changes in the various measures of fertility, including first-birth rates and birth probabilities (first-birth

rates computed for childless women) by age and the proportion of childless women (women at risk of having a first birth). These factors will be described and discussed in detail in the text and the accompanying figures and tables. Because the factors associated with these trends differ by race, the discussion in the following sections will consider each group separately. Where available, data are given for white and black women rather than white and all other women. However, the birth probabilities and the proportions childless shown in figures 1–4 are available only for white and all other women.

This report also describes the impact of trends in the educational attainment of the mother and in nonmarital childbearing on postponed childbearing. Some of the interest associated with delayed first births has focused on the possible deleterious health consequences for mother and child. Selected data (on low birth weight and prenatal care) relating to these concerns are also presented. These data indicate that the higher educational attainment of older, first-time mothers is probably the key factor offsetting these health risks.

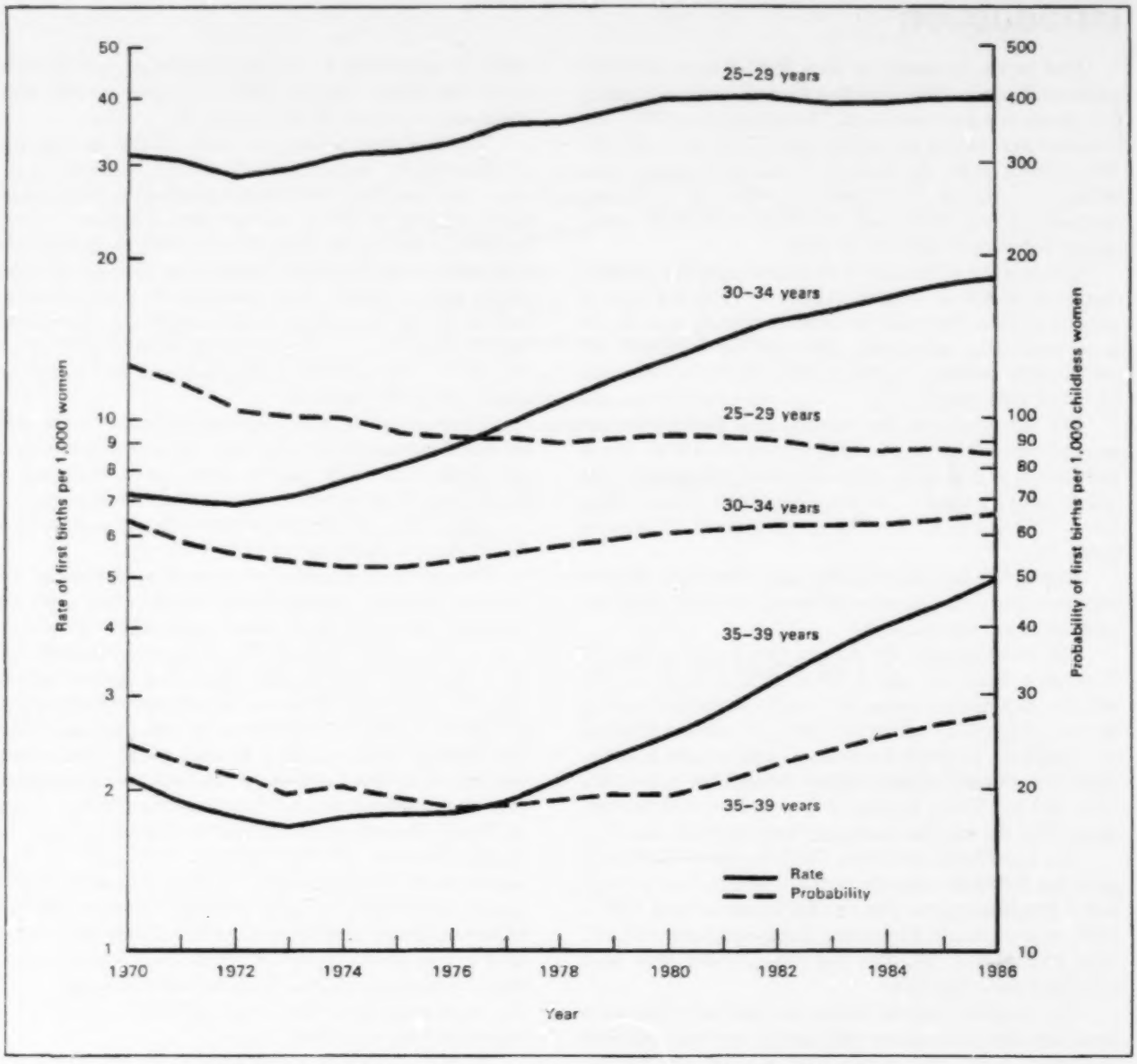

Figure 1. Rates and probabilities of first births to white women 25–39 years of age: United States, 1970–86

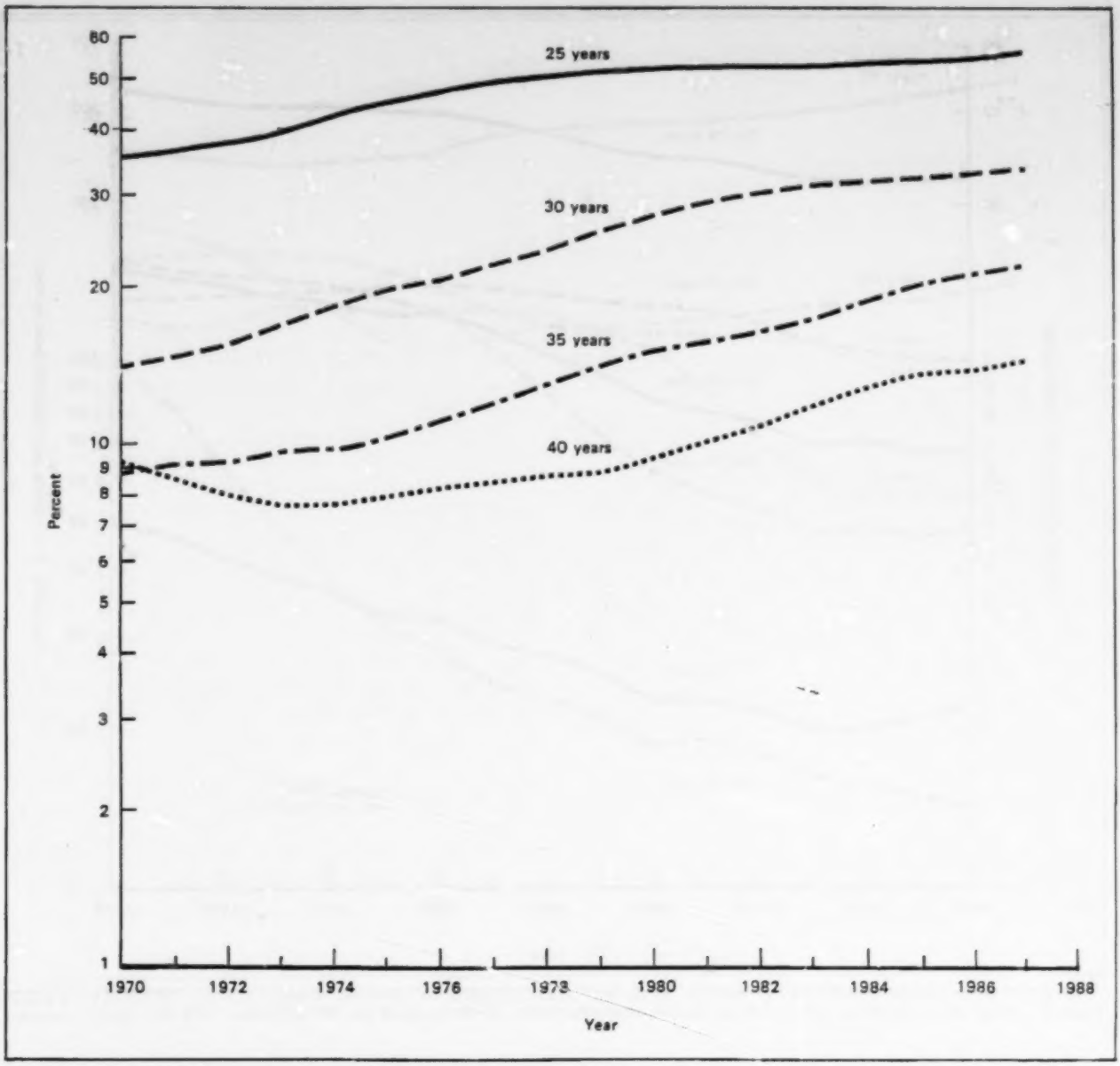

Figure 2. Percent of white women who are childless at exact ages 25, 30, 35, and 40 years: United States, January 1, 1970–January 1, 1987

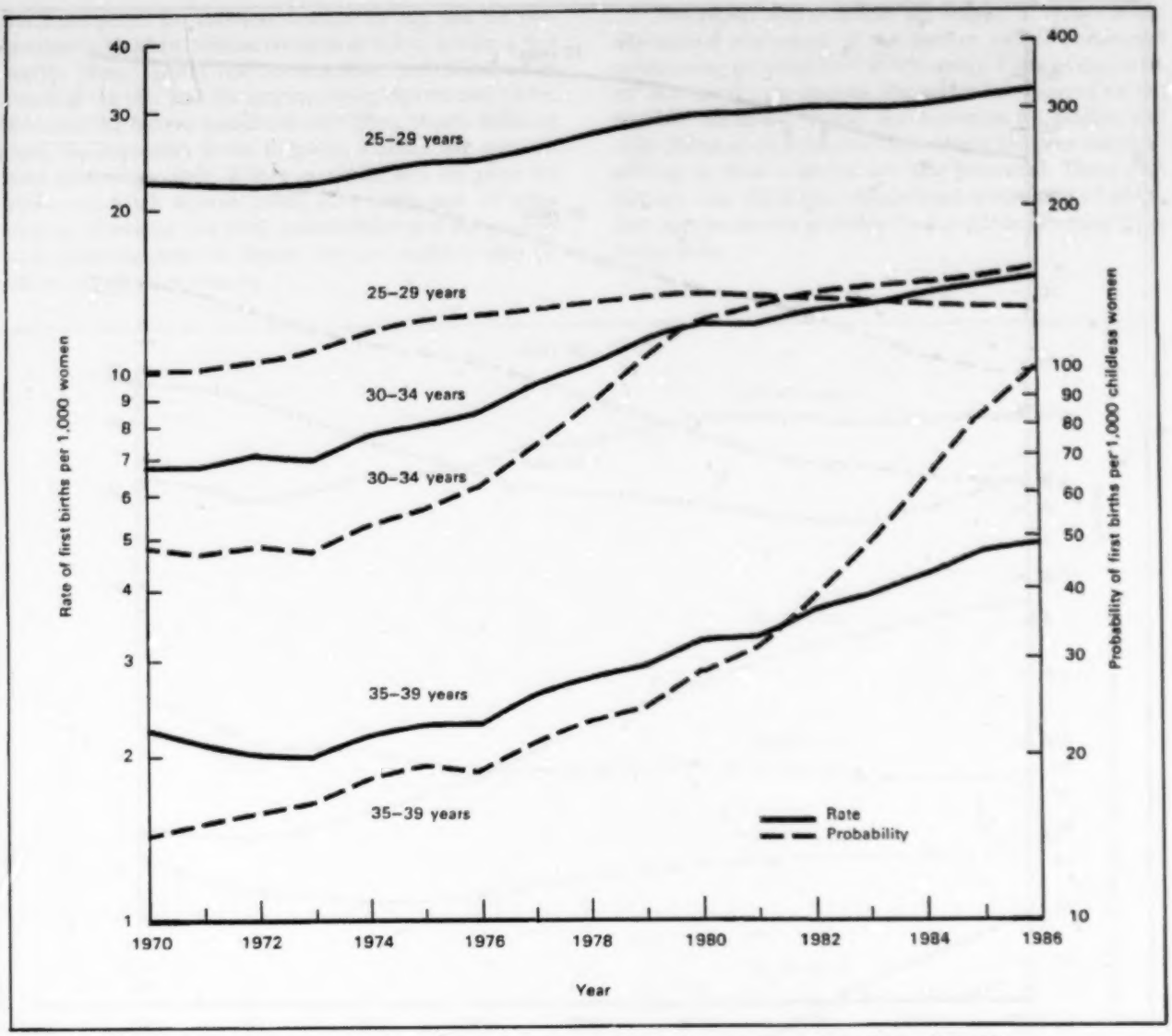

Figure 3. Rates and probabilities of first births to women of all other races, 25–39 years of age: United States, 1970–86

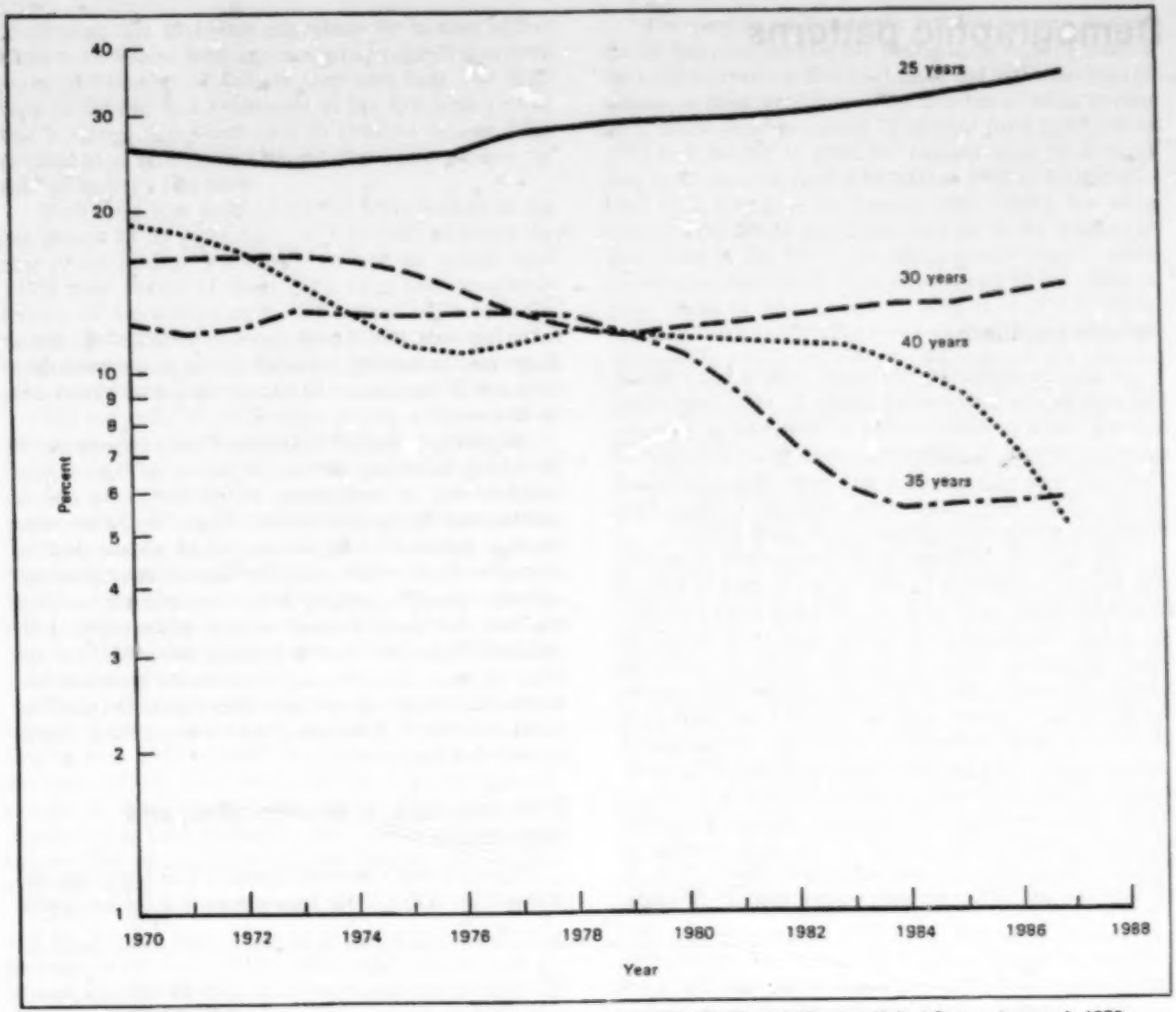

Figure 4. Percent of women of all other races who are childless at exact ages 25, 30, 35, and 40 years: United States, January 1, 1970–January 1, 1987

Female population

A growing proportion of women in their late twenties and early thirties is unmarried (figure 5); many have never married, and a growing fraction is unmarried as a consequence of divorce. In 1986, for example, nearly one-third of 25–29-year-old white women and more than one-half of women of all other races were unmarried, more than double the proportions observed in the early 1960's.

The dramatic increases in the proportions of women who had had no children by ages 25, 30, or even 35 years is described in the next section. In addition to these increases, there has been a rapid rise in the number of women in these age groups (table 6). Between 1970 and 1986 the number of women aged 30–34 years increased 78 percent; the increases for women aged 25–29 and 35–39 years were 60 and 66 percent, respectively. In contrast, the number of women in their early twenties increased by only 20 percent, and the number of teenagers actually declined by 3 percent. These changes reflect the dramatic changes in fertility observed between 1946 and 1972. The large number of female babies born immediately after World War II through the late 1950's are now women aged 25–39 years. From the early 1960's until the early 1970's, there was a sharp drop in fertility, reflected during recent years in a reduction in the number of women aged 15–19 years and 20–24 years.

Beginning in the mid-1970's there was a convergence of the rapidly increasing number of women in their thirties together with an even more sharply increasing rate of childlessness among these women. These two factors combined to produce the largest number of women ever "at risk" of having their first child. Virtually all national surveys of birth expectations among American women have shown that very few women intend or wish to be permanently childless. Therefore, it was perhaps inevitable that the effect of these simultaneous trends would be to increase first-birth rates among women in their thirties (Mosher and Bachrach, 1982; U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1988a). This is, in fact, what happened.

Childlessness, first-birth rates, and probabilities

Figures 1 and 3 show the trends in first-birth rates and probabilities of first births among women in the age groups

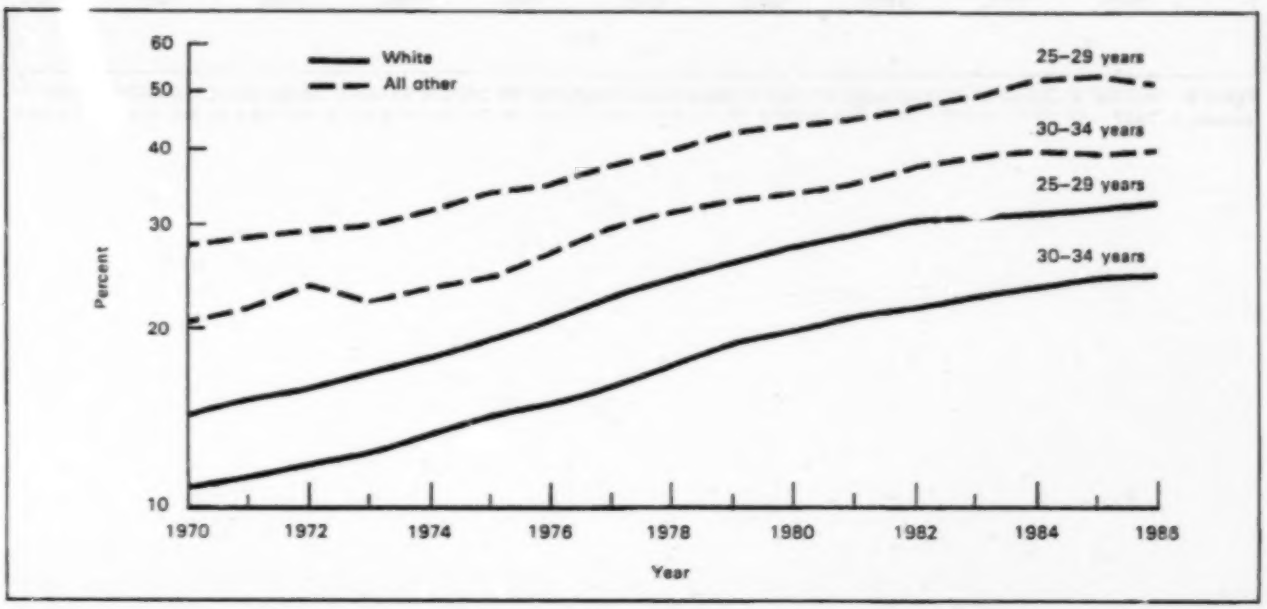

Figure 5. Percent of women unmarried at ages 25–29 years and 30–34 years, by race: United States, 1970–86

25–39 years. The first-birth rate relates the number of first births to all women in an age-race group regardless of their parity (the number of children they have had). The first-birth probability is a refinement of the first-birth rate in that it relates first births only to childless women (also referred to as zero-parity women), that is, the women "at risk" of having a first birth.

Birth rates rose fairly evenly for white women in the age groups 25–39 years from 1973 to 1980, although the pace of the increase was clearly greatest for women aged 30–34 years (figure 1). Since 1980, rates have completely leveled off for women aged 25–29 years, while rates for women in their thirties have continued to increase. In the case of women aged 35–39 years, the increase in recent years has outpaced that measured in the late 1970's.

The incidence of childlessness among white women at various ages has also increased sharply since 1970 (figure 2). Among 25-year-old women the proportion childless reached a record high 55 percent by the end of 1986, compared with 35 percent in 1970. Similarly, the proportion childless among white women aged 30 years rose to 33 percent by the end of 1986 compared with 14 percent in 1970, and for 35-year-old white women, 22 percent at the end of 1986 compared with 9 percent in 1970. In sum, an unusually high proportion of women were "eligible" or "at risk" of having a first baby.

The first-birth probability for 25–29-year-old white women, on the other hand, declined slowly but fairly steadily from 1975 to 1986 after an initial rapid decline in the early 1970's. Thus since 1980 the first-birth rate for women in their late twenties leveled off because of a decline in the birth probability (for childless women) and because the proportion of women with no children was relatively stable.

First-birth probabilities for white women aged 30–34 and 35–39 years have increased in recent years, following declines in the early 1970's. Since 1980 the increase for women aged 35–39 years has been particularly sizable; for those aged 30–34 years it has been more modest. The increases in first-birth rates for white women in their thirties are the result of the combined effect of increased proportions of childless women and the increases in first-birth probabilities.

The rate for 30–34-year-old women increased at a slightly slower pace because the probability of a first birth for these women increased less. This indicates a gradual but clear shift to older ages in the making up of some postponed or delayed first births. Whereas in the 1970's the first-birth rates were increasing most for women in their early thirties and increasing even for women in their late twenties, since 1980 the rates have leveled off for women aged 25–29 years and have continued to increase for women in their thirties, at a slower rate for women aged 30–34 years and more rapidly for women aged 35–39 years. As already pointed out, the question that cannot be answered for at least another decade is the extent to which these women will actually make up the births that they have delayed.

The number of first births to white women in their thirties has risen substantially during these years because of the rapid increases in first-birth rates and in the numbers of women in these age groups. The number of white women aged 30–34 years increased 71 percent from 5,085,000 in 1970 to 8,702,000 in 1986; the number aged 35–39 years rose by 63 percent, from 4,932,000 in 1970 to 8,031,000 in 1986 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1982, 1988b). For white women aged 30–34 years, the increase in the number of first births in the 1970's was much greater than in more recent years, but overall there were more than four times as many births to these women in 1986 as in 1970 (155,261 compared with 36,902). For women in their late thirties, the increase has been greater in the 1980's than in the previous decade; overall, the number born in 1986 was more than three times the number in 1970 (37,450 compared with 10,078) (table 1).

In summary, the number of first births to white women in their thirties has increased since the early 1970's because of increases in three measures: The proportion of women at risk of having a first birth (the proportion childless), the probability of a first birth among these women, and the number of women in these age groups. The increases in the numbers of first births to women in their thirties and older have occurred during a period of relatively little increase in first births to mothers of all ages combined. Mothers aged 30 years and older now account for a much larger proportion of all first births than in any recent year (15 percent in 1986 compared with 4 percent in 1970) (table 3).

Trends in delayed childbearing among mothers of "all other" races have been affected by the changing racial composition of this population since 1970. While black women still comprise the overwhelming majority of this population (nearly 80 percent), the proportion of black women has declined during this period from 89 percent in 1970 to 79 percent in 1986 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1982, 1988b). The remaining 10–20 percent of the population of all other races is American Indian and Asian. In the period covered by the study, the Asian population in particular has increased sharply. Because the fertility patterns of black and American Indian women differ markedly from those of most Asian women, the factors affecting the trends for "all other" women as a group are often offsetting.

Teenage childbearing is relatively common for black and American Indian women compared with Asian women; among babies born in 1986, 23 percent of black infants and 19 percent of American Indian infants were born to teenage mothers compared with only 6 percent of Asian infants. In contrast, only 19 percent of black and American Indian births were to mothers aged 30 years and older compared with 41 percent of Asian births. Furthermore, very few first births to Asian mothers were born to teenagers, only 10 percent in 1986 compared with 41–42 percent of American Indian and black births. In contrast, 27 percent of all Asian first births and 39–41 percent of Chinese and Japanese first births were to mothers aged 30 years and older, much higher levels of childbearing by older mothers than observed for any other racial group. Only 6–8 percent of

American Indian and black first-time mothers were aged 30 years and older. In other words, a much larger proportion of black and American Indian mothers are beginning childbearing at young ages, whereas Asian mothers are much more likely to be delaying their first births. Clearly, mothers of "all other" races are not homogeneous in their childbearing characteristics.

The trends in first-birth rates, probabilities, and proportions childless can be briefly summarized for all other women as a group. First-birth rates for all other women aged 25–39 years have increased fairly steadily beginning in the early 1970's (figure 3, table 2). Since 1980, the rates for women aged 25–29 and 30–34 years have increased at a slower pace, while the rate for women aged 35–39 years has risen more rapidly. The first-birth probabilities also increased during the 1970's. However, since 1980 the probability for women aged 25–29 years has declined; for women aged 30–34 years, it has continued to rise but more slowly; for 35–39-year-old women, it has risen more steeply.

As shown in figure 4, the proportions of childless women of all other races declined steeply for women aged 35 years and 40 years over most of the period 1970–86 while increasing for 25-year-old women; for 30-year-old women the proportion childless declined until the late 1970's and has risen since 1979. In 1987 only 6 percent of 35-year-old women and 5 percent of 40-year-old women were childless, compared with 35 percent of 25-year-old women and 14 percent of 30-year-old women. First-birth rates for all other women aged 30 years and older, especially those 35–39 years, have risen because the probabilities for those women at risk of a first birth have increased and the number of women in these age groups has grown. These increases have been large enough to compensate for the sharp reduction in the proportion of childless women. The drop in childlessness among older women of all other races reflects the high proportion of black and American Indian women who began having children at relatively young ages (and are therefore not childless) combined with the apparently high rate of first-time childbearing by Asian mothers in their thirties. In 1986 the first-birth rate for women of all other races excluding black women was 30.4 for women aged 30–34 years and 9.5 for women aged 35–39 years. Both rates were nearly three times the comparable rates for black women (11.2 and 3.5, respectively) and nearly two times the rates for white women in the same age groups (18.0 and 4.9).

Educational attainment of mother

The educational attainment of women aged 25–39 years who were having their first child rose sharply during the 1970's. The proportion of these mothers who had completed some college (that is, 13–15 years of educational attainment) rose as did the proportion who were college graduates. Since 1980, the proportion with at least 1 year of college has continued to rise, but the proportion with college degrees has increased only for first-time mothers aged 35–39 years, from 44 percent in 1980 to 53 percent in 1986 (table 7).

The educational attainment of the U.S. population as a whole has also increased during this period. However, the level among first-time mothers has continued to exceed that of the general population. Among all women aged 30–34 years, for example, the proportion with college degrees increased from 16 percent in 1975 to 24 percent in 1986 (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1976, 1977, 1988c). Among women of the same age who gave birth to their first child during those years, this proportion increased from 40 percent to 48 percent. Similarly, among all women aged 35–39 years, the proportion with college degrees increased from 12 to 23 percent in this period, while the comparable proportion among first-time mothers rose from 32 to 53 percent.

Some of the rise in educational attainment among first-time mothers can clearly be associated with the general increase in educational attainment of the population during this period. But the far higher level of college completion among the first-time mothers probably reflects the particular characteristics of those postponing motherhood as well as a greater increase in first-birth rates among these women than among their lesser educated counterparts. First-birth rates by age and educational attainment of mother are shown in table 8 for 1970, 1975, 1980, and 1985, years for which the necessary population data were available. These rates indicate that the decline among 20–24-year-old women was especially pronounced among those who have completed college. There were substantial reductions in first-birth rates during the early 1970's for all educational attainment groups, but the only decline that has persisted since 1975 has been for women who have completed college, suggesting that these women are devoting themselves to their careers and are continuing to delay marriage and childbearing.

First-birth rates for 25–29-year-old women increased between 1975 and 1985 for all except those who had completed 4 years of college. Among the latter group, the rate dropped. These women also were evidently postponing marriage and childbearing.

The pattern of making up of postponed childbearing is most evident among women in their thirties. First-birth rates for these women have increased sharply since 1970, especially since 1975. Among women who had completed college, the increases in first-birth rates from 1975 to 1985 were 77 and 96 percent, respectively, for women aged 30–34 and 35–39 years. In summary, women in their thirties giving birth for the first time are increasingly well educated, and increasing proportions of well-educated women in these age groups are giving birth.

When the first-birth rates by age and educational attainment are examined for white and black women separately, it is apparent that well-educated women in both groups have postponed childbearing, and that they are making up for at least some of the delays at a growing pace (table 9). The main difference is that the increases for white

women in their thirties have been for all those with 1 or more years of college, while the increases among comparably aged black women have been concentrated among those with 1–3 years of college. Rates for black women with college degrees have risen less or even declined.

Nonmarital childbearing

Childbearing by unmarried women of all ages has increased at a rapid rate since the mid-1970's. Birth rates for unmarried teenagers have risen steadily and are now higher than ever; in contrast, rates for older mothers had declined by as much as 35 percent between 1970 and 1975 and have since returned to about the 1970 levels (table 10). Rates for first births for unmarried women have increased even faster than for all births. For example, the first-birth rate for unmarried women aged 30–34 years rose 47 percent in the period 1980–86, from 4.5 to 6.6 per 1,000 women, while the overall rate for this age group increased 27 percent. The increases for 35–39-year-old unmarried women had a similar pattern (tables 10 and 11).

The effect of the rising birth rates for unmarried women has been accentuated by the rapid growth in the population of unmarried women, as explained earlier. The number of women in their thirties has increased and the proportion that is not married has risen as well. As a consequence the total number of births to unmarried women in their thirties more than tripled between 1975 and 1986, and the number of first births to these women increased more than sixfold (table 12). For example, 74,928 babies were born to unmarried women aged 30–34 years in 1986 compared with just 19,800 in 1975. The number of first births to these unmarried women also increased, from 3,000 in 1975 to 18,178 in 1986.

The racial differential in the rate of nonmarital childbearing declines with increasing age, but the rate for black women is more than twice the rate for white women even at ages 30 years and older. However, if the basis for comparison is restricted to unmarried women having their first child, the racial differential is reduced. For example, the racial differential in the overall birth rate for unmarried women aged 30–34 years in 1986 was 2.7 compared with 1.6 for first-birth rates. Rates for unmarried women in both racial groups have increased in recent years, but the increases have been much larger for white than for black women, thereby reducing the racial differential.

It is difficult to account for the rising trend in nonmarital childbearing by relatively older women. Presumably, many of these women have chosen to become mothers even though they are single. Data for 1986 on the educational attainment of mothers according to marital status suggest that although unmarried mothers are not as well educated as their married counterparts, still about 30 percent had completed at least 1 year of college and about 10 percent were college graduates. The incidence of mistimed or unwanted births among well-educated women would be expected to be relatively low. More research is needed to determine the factors associated with the rising rates of childbearing by older unmarried women.

Maternal and infant health

Low birth weight

The proportion of babies weighing less than 2,500 grams (5 pounds, 8 ounces) at birth is a widely used measure of birth outcome which in turn is highly correlated both with infant morbidity, including congenital anomalies, and with infant mortality. During the 1970–86 period, the overall proportion of low-birth-weight babies declined from 7.9 to 6.8 percent. All of this decline occurred between 1970 and 1980; since then there has been no change. Declines were observed for all age-of-mother groups, but the greatest reductions (19–21 percent) were for babies born to mothers in their thirties (table 13). In terms of birth weight, the ideal age of the mother has been 25–29 years during this period, but in 1986 births to women aged 30–34 years were only slightly more likely to be of low birth weight (6.1 compared with 6.0 percent).

When the comparisons are restricted to first births, the relationship of low birth weight to the age of the mother is similar, except that first births are at a somewhat higher risk of low birth weight than births of all birth orders combined for mothers who are aged 25 years or older. The decline in percent low birth weight for first births in the 1970–86 period also occurred during the 1970's. Since 1980, the only notable decline has been for first births to mothers aged 35–39 years, from 9.5 to 8.8 percent; the percent low birth weight for births to mothers in their forties increased.

First births to white and black mothers in their thirties are at greater risk in terms of low birth weight than those born to younger mothers, but this risk declined for both white and black babies during the 1970's. Still, first births born to black women in their thirties are about twice as likely as those born to white women to weigh less than 5½ pounds. This differential increased somewhat between 1970 and 1986.

The greater decline in the incidence of low birth weight among first births to mothers in their thirties compared with first births to younger mothers is probably a reflection of the changing characteristics of older first-time mothers. Prior to 1970, relatively few women were postponing motherhood until age 30 years or later. Rates of childlessness were very low and the few women who did have their first child after age 30 years probably did so not by choice but after many years of trying unsuccessfully to become pregnant or to carry a pregnancy to term. Since the early 1970's, more women have intentionally delayed childbearing.

The educational attainment of women who became mothers at relatively older ages has dramatically increased. Whereas in 1970 only about one-fourth of the women having their first child at age 30 years or older were college graduates, about one-half of their counterparts in 1986 had completed 4 years of college. Greater educational attainment in turn is associated with more timely receipt of prenatal care and a better outcome in terms of birth weight. For babies born to college graduates aged 30–34 years, only 5.8 percent were low birth weight compared with 7.5 percent for all first births to mothers in this age group (table 14). Comparison of each of the four age groups (ages 20–39 years) shows that the percent low birth weight for babies born to college graduates was 20–33 percent below the average for each age group. This helps explain the marked decline in levels of low birth weight among first births to mothers in their thirties.

The relationships between low birth weight and educational attainment of mother for white and black babies were similar. In every educational attainment category, however, first births to black mothers were at roughly twice the risk of weighing less than 2,500 grams as were first births to white mothers. Furthermore, within each age-of-mother group the racial differential in low birth weight generally increased with advancing educational attainment.

Prenatal care

As noted above, a major reason why first births to older mothers are at a relative advantage is the high level of educational attainment of these mothers, which in turn is a critical factor accounting for differentials in receipt of prenatal care. Older women who become pregnant are at a somewhat elevated risk of certain complications. Early receipt of prenatal care can help identify problems and provide the physician and the mother with the opportunity to treat them. In 1986, 94 percent of white and 86 percent of black mothers in their thirties who were college graduates began prenatal care in the first trimester. The distribution of first births for 1986 according to month of pregnancy in which prenatal care was begun is shown in table 15. Among white and black women having their first child, those in their early thirties were the most likely to receive prenatal care early and the least likely to have delayed care (beginning in the third trimester) or no care at all.

Advanced educational attainment and early receipt of prenatal care are in turn associated with favorable levels of low birth weight. Among births to women in their thirties with college degrees who began prenatal care in the first trimester, fewer than 5 percent weighed less than 5½ pounds in 1986. (Data are not shown in this report.) Even among the few college graduates whose care was delayed until the second or third trimester, the proportion of low-birth-weight babies did not exceed 5.5 percent. These relationships are observed for white and black women, but in each age–educational attainment–prenatal care category, babies born to black women had more than twice the risk of low birth weight as babies born to white women.

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Table 1. Number of first births by age of mother and race of child: United States, 1970–86

Year and race of child	Total first births[1]	Age of mother					
		15–19 years	20–24 years	25–29 years	30–34 years	35–39 years	40–44 years
All races[2]							
1986	1,553,751	355,233	534,121	424,088	181,504	44,427	4,419
1985	1,554,788	359,272	552,974	418,658	170,686	39,447	3,804
1984	1,529,905	361,493	554,790	406,531	159,238	34,827	3,287
1983	1,530,639	377,467	564,327	398,531	147,809	30,134	2,954
1982	1,555,627	395,507	588,979	396,620	136,814	25,799	2,498
1981	1,553,665	407,615	600,444	388,419	125,323	20,337	2,179
1980	1,545,604	425,676	605,183	371,859	112,964	18,241	1,964
1979	1,479,260	425,282	576,379	348,493	100,435	16,462	1,904
1978	1,401,491	418,711	545,778	322,587	88,091	14,290	1,751
1977	1,387,143	430,622	544,194	310,507	76,485	12,766	1,674
1976	1,324,811	431,219	517,376	288,086	63,396	11,654	1,666
1975	1,319,126	451,586	516,528	269,688	56,677	10,901	1,671
1974	1,314,194	462,107	517,467	257,569	52,897	10,433	1,782
1973	1,243,358	454,684	492,607	226,685	46,434	9,639	1,798
1972	1,289,257	473,260	531,945	217,992	42,863	9,954	1,998
1971	1,375,668	485,158	613,822	210,852	41,822	10,640	2,286
1970	1,430,680	498,388	652,530	212,102	42,404	11,704	2,442
White							
1986	1,242,909	247,384	432,157	363,084	155,261	37,450	3,592
1985	1,252,043	252,887	452,260	359,808	146,892	33,075	3,092
1984	1,234,785	254,632	456,197	350,745	137,274	29,356	2,670
1983	1,240,657	269,075	467,051	345,278	127,485	25,438	2,388
1982	1,266,455	285,002	490,901	345,005	117,797	21,673	2,002
1981	1,269,993	295,955	503,807	339,660	108,027	16,914	1,692
1980	1,263,000	309,175	509,537	326,675	96,900	15,071	1,556
1979	1,205,958	307,075	485,865	306,885	86,621	13,609	1,579
1978	1,143,073	302,975	461,890	284,299	76,270	11,784	1,429
1977	1,134,062	312,280	463,468	275,569	66,319	10,494	1,362
1976	1,083,218	314,341	442,079	255,774	55,023	9,688	1,391
1975	1,075,597	329,151	442,849	239,412	48,794	9,056	1,361
1974	1,074,068	337,677	445,835	229,962	45,481	8,722	1,498
1973	1,018,663	334,933	425,532	203,644	40,346	8,158	1,517
1972	1,055,442	347,954	460,291	195,748	36,798	8,523	1,763
1971	1,137,080	359,646	536,746	189,442	36,152	9,080	1,988
1970	1,193,712	374,042	575,594	190,360	36,902	10,078	2,152
Black							
1986	244,106	96,696	82,988	39,681	14,769	3,849	444
1985	238,680	95,619	82,016	38,207	13,300	3,489	391
1984	233,583	96,109	80,151	36,129	12,295	3,011	353
1983	230,294	97,543	78,877	34,434	11,271	2,650	323
1982	230,425	99,035	79,473	33,370	10,811	2,363	267
1981	230,190	100,977	79,616	32,152	9,989	2,000	280
1980	232,293	106,119	79,350	29,982	9,283	1,889	233
1979	228,473	108,397	76,272	27,975	8,032	1,771	202
1978	216,446	106,299	70,499	25,298	6,937	1,542	201
1977	215,676	109,195	68,691	23,804	6,203	1,467	189
1976	206,729	107,996	63,857	22,000	5,145	1,274	178
1975	210,432	114,000	63,004	20,297	4,895	1,169	214
1974	208,151	116,007	61,044	18,385	4,603	1,067	175
1973	195,083	111,598	56,746	15,104	3,727	921	184
1972	205,090	117,629	61,085	14,844	3,755	893	154
1971	210,926	118,134	66,454	14,556	3,622	1,060	210
1970	211,468	117,228	67,092	15,060	3,822	1,162	220

[1] Includes births to women aged under 15 years and 45–49 years which are not shown separately.
[2] Includes races other than white and black.

Table 2. Rate of first births by age of mother and race of child: United States, 1970–86

[Rates are first births per 1,000 women in specified group]

Year and race of child	Age of mother						
	15–44 years[1]	15–19 years	20–24 years	25–29 years	30–34 years	35–39 years	40–44 years
All races[2]							
1986	27.2	39.1	52.7	38.8	17.5	4.7	0.6
1985	27.6	39.7	53.0	38.8	16.9	4.4	0.5
1984	27.4	39.4	52.4	38.0	16.2	4.1	0.5
1983	27.8	40.2	52.9	37.9	15.4	3.7	0.4
1982	28.6	41.0	54.7	38.4	14.6	3.3	0.4
1981	29.0	41.1	55.7	38.8	13.3	2.8	0.4
1980	29.5	41.4	57.3	38.2	12.8	2.6	0.3
1979	28.6	40.9	55.0	36.5	11.8	2.4	0.3
1978	27.8	40.2	53.1	34.8	10.8	2.2	0.3
1977	28.2	41.3	54.1	34.2	9.7	2.0	0.3
1976	27.5	41.4	52.9	31.7	8.7	1.9	0.3
1975	28.1	43.9	54.0	31.4	8.0	1.9	0.3
1974	28.7	45.6	55.8	31.5	7.7	1.8	0.3
1973	28.6	47.3	56.0	29.7	7.2	1.7	0.3
1972	29.8	49.1	60.6	29.2	7.0	1.8	0.3
1971	32.0	50.7	68.9	30.2	7.0	1.9	0.4
1970	34.2	53.7	78.2	31.2	7.3	2.1	0.4
White							
1986	26.0	33.4	51.6	39.9	17.9	4.7	0.6
1985	26.5	34.2	52.3	39.9	17.4	4.4	0.5
1984	26.4	33.9	51.7	39.2	16.6	4.0	0.5
1983	26.8	34.9	52.5	39.2	15.7	3.7	0.4
1982	27.7	35.8	54.5	39.8	14.9	3.2	0.4
1981	28.1	36.0	55.6	40.2	13.5	2.7	0.3
1980	28.4	36.0	57.2	39.6	12.8	2.5	0.3
1979	27.4	35.2	54.8	37.9	11.8	2.3	0.3
1978	26.6	34.6	53.0	36.0	10.9	2.1	0.3
1977	26.9	35.5	54.2	35.5	9.7	2.0	0.3
1976	26.3	35.7	53.0	32.7	8.8	1.9	0.3
1975	26.7	37.8	54.2	32.3	7.9	1.8	0.3
1974	27.2	39.2	56.1	32.4	7.7	1.7	0.3
1973	27.0	40.6	56.1	30.6	7.2	1.7	0.3
1972	28.1	42.1	60.7	29.9	6.9	1.8	0.3
1971	30.5	43.9	69.5	31.1	7.0	1.9	0.4
1970	32.9	47.1	79.4	32.3	7.4	2.1	0.4
Black							
1986	32.5	70.3	57.3	27.1	11.2	3.5	0.6
1985	32.4	69.8	55.9	26.5	10.4	3.4	0.5
1984	32.2	68.7	54.5	25.5	9.9	3.1	0.5
1983	32.3	68.8	53.8	24.9	9.5	2.9	0.4
1982	33.0	69.3	53.6	25.0	9.4	2.7	0.4
1981	33.8	69.3	54.4	25.1	9.0	2.4	0.4
1980	35.2	71.8	55.9	24.3	9.1	2.4	0.3
1979	35.3	73.3	54.6	23.4	8.3	2.3	0.3
1978	34.6	72.4	52.1	22.2	7.6	2.1	0.3
1977	35.6	75.5	52.7	21.8	7.1	2.0	0.3
1976	35.2	75.5	51.0	20.9	6.3	1.8	0.3
1975	36.9	80.8	51.9	20.8	6.0	1.7	0.3
1974	37.7	84.4	52.5	20.1	5.9	1.6	0.3
1973	38.9	89.2	54.0	18.6	5.2	1.5	0.3
1972	40.7	93.6	58.5	18.6	5.3	1.4	0.2
1971	41.7	94.4	63.8	18.7	5.1	1.6	0.3
1970	43.3	97.6	69.8	19.8	5.6	1.8	0.3

[1]Rates computed by relating first births, regardless of age of mother, to women aged 15–44 years.
[2]Includes races other than white and black.

Table 3. Percent distribution of first births by age of mother, according to race of child: United States, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, and 1986

Year and race of child	Age of mother					
	All ages	Under 20 years	20–24 years	25–29 years	30–34 years	35 years and over
All races[1]						
1986	100.0	23.5	34.4	27.3	11.7	3.2
1985	100.0	23.7	35.6	26.9	11.0	2.8
1980	100.0	28.2	39.2	24.1	7.3	1.3
1975	100.0	35.1	39.2	20.4	4.3	1.0
1970	100.0	35.6	45.6	14.8	3.0	1.0
White						
1986	100.0	20.2	34.8	29.2	12.5	3.3
1985	100.0	20.5	36.1	28.7	11.7	2.9
1980	100.0	24.8	40.3	25.9	7.7	1.3
1975	100.0	31.1	41.2	22.3	4.5	1.0
1970	100.0	31.7	48.2	16.0	3.1	1.0
Black						
1986	100.0	41.9	34.0	16.3	6.1	1.8
1985	100.0	42.4	34.4	16.0	5.6	1.6
1980	100.0	48.0	34.2	12.9	4.0	0.9
1975	100.0	57.4	29.9	9.6	2.3	0.7
1970	100.0	58.7	31.7	7.1	1.8	0.7

[1] Includes races other than white and black.

Table 4. Birth rates by age of mother and race of child: United States, 1970–86

[Birth rates are live births per 1,000 women in specified group]

Year and race of child	Age of mother						
	15–44 years[1]	15–19 years	20–24 years	25–29 years	30–34 years	35–39 years	40–44 years
All races[2]							
1986	65.4	50.6	108.2	109.2	69.3	24.3	4.1
1985	66.2	51.3	108.9	110.5	68.5	23.9	4.0
1984	65.4	50.9	107.3	108.3	66.5	22.8	3.9
1983	65.8	51.7	108.3	108.7	64.6	22.1	3.8
1982	67.3	52.9	111.3	111.0	64.2	21.1	3.9
1981	67.4	52.7	111.8	112.0	61.4	20.0	3.8
1980	68.4	53.0	115.1	112.9	61.9	19.8	3.9
1979	67.2	52.3	112.8	111.4	60.3	19.5	3.9
1978	65.5	51.5	109.9	108.5	57.8	19.0	3.9
1977	66.8	52.8	112.9	111.0	56.4	19.2	4.2
1976	65.0	52.8	110.3	106.2	53.6	19.0	4.3
1975	66.0	55.6	113.0	108.2	52.3	19.5	4.6
1974	67.8	57.5	117.7	111.5	53.8	20.2	4.8
1973	68.8	59.3	119.7	112.2	55.6	22.1	5.4
1972	73.1	61.7	130.2	117.7	59.8	24.8	6.2
1971	81.6	64.5	150.1	134.1	67.3	28.7	7.1
1970	87.9	68.3	167.8	145.1	73.3	31.7	8.1
White							
1986	61.9	41.8	101.5	108.3	68.9	23.3	3.7
1985	63.0	42.8	102.8	110.0	68.1	22.7	3.6
1984	62.2	42.5	101.4	107.7	66.1	21.7	3.5
1983	62.4	43.6	102.6	108.0	64.0	21.0	3.5
1982	63.9	44.6	105.9	110.3	63.3	20.0	3.5
1981	63.9	44.6	106.3	111.3	60.2	18.7	3.4
1980	64.7	44.7	109.5	112.4	60.4	18.5	3.4
1979	63.4	43.7	107.0	110.8	59.0	18.3	3.5
1978	61.7	42.9	104.1	107.9	56.6	17.7	3.5
1977	63.2	44.1	107.7	110.9	55.3	18.0	3.8
1976	61.5	44.1	105.3	105.9	52.6	17.8	3.9
1975	62.5	46.4	108.2	108.1	51.3	18.2	4.2
1974	64.2	47.9	113.0	111.8	52.9	18.9	4.4
1973	64.9	49.0	114.4	112.3	54.4	20.7	4.9
1972	68.9	51.0	124.8	117.4	58.4	23.3	5.6
1971	77.3	53.6	144.9	134.0	65.4	26.9	6.4
1970	84.1	57.4	163.4	145.9	71.9	30.0	7.5
Black							
1986	82.4	98.1	143.7	105.9	62.2	25.5	5.1
1985	82.2	97.4	140.8	105.1	60.7	25.5	4.9
1984	81.4	95.7	137.9	103.2	59.5	24.8	5.1
1983	81.7	95.5	137.7	103.4	59.2	24.7	5.2
1982	84.1	97.0	139.1	106.9	60.4	24.4	5.4
1981	85.4	97.1	141.2	108.3	60.4	24.2	5.6
1980	88.1	100.0	146.3	109.1	62.9	24.5	5.8
1979	88.3	101.7	146.3	108.2	60.7	24.7	6.1
1978	86.7	100.9	143.8	105.4	58.3	24.3	6.1
1977	88.1	104.7	144.4	106.4	57.5	25.4	6.6
1976	85.8	104.9	140.5	101.6	53.6	24.8	6.8
1975	87.9	111.8	142.8	102.2	53.1	25.6	7.5
1974	89.7	116.5	146.7	102.2	54.1	27.0	7.6
1973	93.6	123.1	153.1	103.9	58.1	29.4	8.6
1972	99.9	129.8	165.0	112.4	64.0	33.4	9.8
1971	109.7	134.5	186.6	128.0	74.8	38.9	11.6
1970	115.4	140.7	202.7	136.3	79.6	41.9	12.5

[1]Computed by relating total births, regardless of age of mother, to women aged 15–44 years.
[2]Includes races other than white and black.

Table 5. Percent distribution of live births by live-birth order, according to age of mother and race of child: United States, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, and 1986

[Live-birth order refers to number of children born alive to mother. Figures for live-birth order not stated are distributed]

Year and race of child	25–29 years					30–34 years					35–39 years				
	All birth orders	1st child	2d child	3d child	4th child or more	All birth orders	1st child	2d child	3d child	4th child or more	All birth orders	1st child	2d child	3d child	4th child or more
All races[1]															
1986	100.0	35.5	36.9	18.1	9.4	100.0	25.3	35.9	22.5	16.3	100.0	19.4	29.3	23.4	28.0
1985	100.0	35.1	37.3	18.2	9.4	100.0	24.7	36.0	22.6	16.7	100.0	18.5	28.5	23.5	29.5
1980	100.0	33.8	37.1	19.0	10.1	100.0	20.7	33.4	24.6	21.3	100.0	13.0	21.2	22.6	43.2
1975	100.0	29.1	38.6	20.0	12.3	100.0	15.2	28.4	25.0	31.4	100.0	9.5	15.7	18.6	56.3
1970	100.0	21.5	31.9	24.2	22.4	100.0	10.0	18.4	23.5	48.2	100.0	6.5	10.9	16.1	66.4
White															
1986	100.0	36.8	37.6	17.6	7.9	100.0	26.1	36.8	22.5	14.6	100.0	20.2	30.1	23.6	26.2
1985	100.0	36.3	38.2	17.7	7.8	100.0	25.5	36.9	22.5	15.1	100.0	19.2	29.2	23.7	27.9
1980	100.0	35.3	37.9	18.5	8.4	100.0	21.3	34.2	24.9	19.7	100.0	13.4	21.4	23.2	42.0
1975	100.0	29.9	39.8	19.8	10.5	100.0	15.5	29.2	25.9	29.4	100.0	9.8	16.0	19.4	54.8
1970	100.0	22.1	33.2	24.8	19.8	100.0	10.3	19.0	24.8	45.9	100.0	6.8	11.4	17.3	64.4
Black															
1986	100.0	25.6	33.6	22.6	18.2	100.0	17.9	29.7	24.6	27.7	100.0	13.7	23.4	23.0	39.8
1985	100.0	25.2	33.6	22.7	18.6	100.0	17.1	29.6	24.7	28.6	100.0	13.4	22.7	22.8	41.1
1980	100.0	22.2	32.6	23.9	21.2	100.0	14.5	26.7	24.7	34.1	100.0	9.7	17.2	19.4	53.6
1975	100.0	20.4	30.2	22.4	27.0	100.0	11.4	20.7	19.9	48.1	100.0	6.7	11.7	13.9	67.7
1970	100.0	14.5	21.5	20.1	43.8	100.0	7.1	12.7	14.6	65.6	100.0	4.3	7.5	9.8	78.4

[1] Includes races other than white and black.

Table 6. Number of women aged 15–44 years: United States, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, and 1986

[Number in thousands. Population enumerated as of April 1 for 1970 and 1980 and estimated as of July 1 for other years. Due to rounding to the nearest thousand, detailed figures may not add to totals]

Year	Total 15–44 years	15–19 years	20–24 years	25–29 years	30–34 years	35–39 years	40–44 years
1986	57,483	9,128	10,183	10,982	10,407	9,467	7,316
1985	56,764	9,106	10,483	10,869	10,172	8,967	7,167
1980	53,048	10,360	10,684	9,877	8,976	7,160	5,992
1975	47,606	10,465	9,677	8,660	7,173	5,931	5,700
1970	42,437	9,437	8,454	6,855	5,835	5,694	6,162

SOURCE: U.S. Bureau of the Census.

Table 7. Number of first births to women 20–39 years of age by race of child, and percent distribution by educational attainment of mother, according to age of mother and race of child: Reporting area, 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, and 1986

[Figures for educational attainment not stated are included in totals but excluded from percent distribution]

Age of mother and years of school completed by mother	All races[1]					White					Black				
	1986[2]	1985[2]	1980[2]	1975[3]	1970[4]	1986[2]	1985[2]	1980[2]	1975[3]	1970[4]	1986[2]	1985[2]	1980[2]	1975[3]	1970[4]
20–24 years								Number							
First births	413,584	429,220	479,424	369,645	431,358	332,221	349,070	401,811	315,125	382,392	69,631	68,805	66,514	47,599	42,882
								Percent distribution							
All years of school completed	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
0–11 years	12.1	12.1	11.7	11.9	11.1	12.0	11.8	11.3	11.3	10.4	11.9	12.5	12.6	14.9	15.8
12 years	54.8	55.3	57.4	57.4	56.4	55.2	55.9	58.5	58.1	56.5	53.8	53.2	52.3	55.1	56.6
13–15 years	26.3	25.7	24.2	23.1	23.9	25.7	25.1	23.4	22.9	24.1	29.3	29.1	28.9	23.6	22.3
16 years or more	6.8	6.9	6.7	7.6	8.7	7.0	7.2	6.8	7.7	9.0	5.0	5.3	6.1	6.4	5.3
25–29 years								Number							
First births	332,768	328,446	296,048	195,284	137,688	288,095	285,810	262,062	173,778	124,720	32,904	31,532	24,861	15,545	9,532
								Percent distribution							
All years of school completed	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
0–11 years	4.1	4.0	3.8	5.3	8.4	3.6	3.4	3.3	4.8	7.7	7.5	7.3	7.5	9.9	15.9
12 years	35.8	35.8	34.1	34.7	38.9	35.8	35.9	34.1	34.5	39.0	37.2	36.7	36.9	40.8	43.5
13–15 years	27.0	27.2	26.1	22.7	19.2	26.9	27.0	26.2	22.8	19.4	30.5	30.8	26.7	22.4	17.9
16 years or more	33.1	33.0	36.0	37.3	33.5	33.7	33.6	36.4	37.9	33.9	24.8	25.2	28.9	26.8	22.7
30–34 years								Number							
First births	139,774	131,625	87,240	40,314	27,226	121,634	115,253	75,708	34,691	23,920	12,311	11,089	7,610	3,843	2,470
								Percent distribution							
All years of school completed	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
0–11 years	2.9	2.9	4.1	8.7	14.0	2.3	2.2	3.4	8.0	13.3	7.4	7.9	8.1	15.8	21.6
12 years	25.5	25.2	26.4	33.3	41.8	25.1	24.8	26.0	33.3	42.3	31.2	31.0	33.8	39.1	41.6
13–15 years	23.5	23.3	20.6	18.0	15.9	23.4	23.3	20.5	18.3	16.2	26.4	25.2	22.3	17.2	13.8
16 years or more	48.1	48.6	48.9	39.9	28.3	49.2	49.7	50.0	40.3	28.2	35.1	36.0	35.8	28.0	22.8
35–39 years								Number							
First births	33,460	29,591	13,812	7,846	7,638	28,710	25,273	11,506	6,531	6,606	3,238	2,920	1,581	913	790
								Percent distribution							
All years of school completed	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
0–11 years	3.8	4.2	8.4	14.8	21.7	3.0	3.4	7.4	14.1	20.5	9.5	9.1	14.8	20.9	32.3
12 years	22.9	23.4	30.3	38.6	42.8	22.0	22.5	29.9	39.3	43.6	30.8	32.7	37.1	39.4	40.3
13–15 years	20.2	20.1	17.8	15.1	13.5	20.2	20.0	18.0	15.4	14.0	22.1	22.3	18.4	13.9	11.2
16 years or more	53.1	52.3	43.5	31.5	22.0	54.8	54.2	44.7	31.3	22.0	37.6	35.9	29.7	25.8	16.3

[1] Includes races other than white and black.
[2] 47 States and the District of Columbia in reporting area.
[3] 42 States and the District of Columbia in reporting area.
[4] 38 States in reporting area.

Table 8. First-birth rates by age and educational attainment of mother: United States, 1970 and 1975, and total of 47 States and the District of Columbia, 1980 and 1985

[Rates are first births per 1,000 women in specified age and educational attainment group. See Appendix]

Age of mother	0–11 years				12 years				13–15 years				16 years or more			
	1985[1]	1980[1]	1975[2]	1970[2]	1985[1]	1980[1]	1975[2]	1970[2]	1985[1]	1980[1]	1975[2]	1970[2]	1985[1]	1980[1]	1975[2]	1970[2]
20–24 years	43.4	41.3	40.0	44.9	66.2	72.9	69.9	93.0	44.9	43.4	45.1	73.3	28.9	39.7	40.1	81.1
25–29 years	13.2	9.7	9.4	10.0	30.7	30.1	24.5	25.3	50.7	45.0	42.2	43.3	58.1	65.8	64.4	80.3
30–34 years	4.1	3.0	3.1	3.7	9.3	7.3	5.9	6.3	17.7	12.6	9.8	9.6	35.6	29.8	20.1	19.1
35–39 years	1.3	0.9	1.0	1.3	2.2	1.6	1.5	1.9	4.4	2.5	2.1	2.7	9.4	6.6	4.8	5.0

[1]Rates are based on births which exclude data for California, Texas, and Washington, which did not require reporting of educational attainment of mother.
[2]Rates are based on estimates of births by educational attainment of mother for the entire United States; see Appendix.

Table 9. First-birth rates by age and educational attainment of mother and race of child: Total of 47 reporting States and the District of Columbia, 1980 and 1985

[Rates are first births per 1,000 women in specified age, educational attainment, and racial group. See Appendix]

Race of child and age of mother	0–11 years		12 years		13–15 years		16 years or more	
	1985	1980	1985	1980	1985	1980	1985	1980
White								
20–24 years	46.5	44.6	65.3	73.4	42.6	41.4	27.3	37.4
25–29 years	13.3	10.0	32.2	31.4	53.6	47.3	58.5	66.1
30–34 years	3.8	2.9	9.6	7.2	18.2	12.7	36.8	29.7
35–39 years	1.1	0.9	2.1	1.5	4.4	2.4	9.4	6.3
Black								
20–24 years	32.8	28.1	68.2	67.6	57.6	54.2	46.5	59.8
25–29 years	11.4	7.0	19.9	20.3	34.6	29.4	50.8	57.0
30–34 years	4.0	2.4	6.8	6.9	13.1	9.9	24.4	27.0
35–39 years	1.3	0.9	2.4	2.2	4.1	2.8	8.5	7.2

NOTE: Excludes data for California, Texas, and Washington, which did not require reporting of educational attainment of mother.

Table 10. Birth rates for unmarried women by age of mother and race of child: United States, 1970, 1975, and 1980–86

[Rates per 1,000 unmarried women in specified group]

Year and race of child	Age of mother						
	15–44 years[1]	15–19 years	20–24 years	25–29 years	30–34 years	35–39 years	40–44 years[2]
All races[3]							
1986[4]	34.3	32.6	49.7	42.0	26.9	12.2	2.7
1985[4]	32.8	31.6	46.8	39.8	25.0	11.6	2.5
1984[4]	31.0	30.2	43.2	37.0	23.2	10.9	2.5
1983[4]	30.4	29.7	42.0	35.6	22.3	10.3	2.5
1982[4]	30.0	28.9	41.4	35.1	21.9	10.0	2.7
1981[4]	29.6	28.2	40.9	34.7	20.8	9.8	2.6
1980[4]	29.4	27.6	40.9	34.0	21.1	9.7	2.6
1975[5]	24.5	23.9	31.2	27.5	17.9	9.1	2.6
1970[5]	26.4	22.4	38.4	37.0	27.1	13.6	3.5
White							
1986[4]	23.2	21.5	33.5	29.2	19.2	9.3	2.1
1985[4]	21.8	20.5	30.9	27.3	17.5	8.6	1.9
1984[4]	20.1	19.0	27.8	24.5	16.1	8.0	1.9
1983[4]	19.3	18.5	26.4	22.9	15.3	7.5	1.9
1982[4]	18.8	17.7	25.7	22.2	14.7	7.1	2.0
1981[4]	18.2	17.1	24.9	21.6	13.6	6.9	1.8
1980[4]	17.6	16.2	24.4	20.7	13.6	6.8	1.8
1975[5]	12.4	12.0	15.5	14.8	9.8	5.4	1.5
1970[5]	13.9	10.9	22.5	21.1	14.2	7.6	2.0
Black							
1986[4]	80.9	89.9	121.4	86.7	51.1	21.6	4.7
1985[4]	78.8	88.8	116.1	81.4	48.8	21.3	4.5
1984[4]	76.8	87.1	110.7	80.0	45.0	20.3	4.5
1983[4]	77.7	86.4	110.0	82.0	45.3	20.3	4.9
1982[4]	79.6	87.0	110.2	85.5	45.8	20.1	5.4
1981[4]	81.4	86.8	112.5	86.4	47.2	20.4	5.8
1980[4]	82.9	89.2	115.1	83.9	48.2	19.6	5.6
1975[5]	84.2	93.5	108.0	75.7	50.0	20.5	7.2
1970[5]	95.5	96.9	131.5	100.9	71.8	32.9	10.4

[1]Rates computed by relating total births to unmarried mothers, regardless of age of mother, to unmarried women aged 15–44 years.
[2]Rates computed by relating births to unmarried mothers aged 40 years and over to unmarried women aged 40–44 years.
[3]Includes races other than white and black.
[4]Data for States in which marital status was not reported have been inferred and included with data from the remaining States; see Appendix.
[5]Births to unmarried women are estimated for the United States from data for registration areas in which marital status of mother was reported; see Appendix.

Table 11. First-birth rates for unmarried women by age of mother and race of child: United States, 1980–86

[Rates are first births to unmarried women per 1,000 unmarried women in specified group]

Year and race of child	Age of mother						
	15–44 years[1]	15–19 years	20–24 years	25–29 years	30–34 years	35–39 years	40–44 years[2]
All races[3]							
1986	17.8	25.9	23.7	12.3	6.6	2.7	0.5
1985	17.2	25.2	22.3	11.6	6.1	2.5	0.4
1984	16.4	24.0	20.6	10.7	5.6	2.2	0.4
1983	16.3	23.7	19.9	10.1	5.2	2.0	0.3
1982	16.3	23.1	19.7	10.1	5.0	1.8	0.3
1981	16.3	22.6	19.6	10.0	4.6	1.6	0.3
1980	16.5	22.3	19.8	9.7	4.5	1.5	0.3
White							
1986	13.3	18.2	18.0	9.9	5.7	2.5	0.4
1985	12.6	17.4	16.8	9.3	5.3	2.2	0.4
1984	11.8	16.2	15.0	8.4	4.8	2.0	0.3
1983	11.5	15.9	14.4	7.9	4.5	1.7	0.3
1982	11.4	15.2	14.3	7.8	4.2	1.6	0.3
1981	11.3	14.8	14.0	7.6	3.8	1.4	0.2
1980	11.1	14.1	13.9	7.4	3.6	1.3	0.3
Black							
1986	37.0	65.4	48.8	20.3	8.9	3.1	0.5
1985	36.4	64.8	46.7	19.0	8.3	3.0	0.5
1984	36.1	63.9	44.7	18.4	7.7	2.8	0.5
1983	36.8	63.7	43.6	18.3	7.5	2.7	0.4
1982	37.8	63.8	43.4	18.9	7.5	2.4	0.4
1981	39.3	63.8	44.5	19.2	7.6	2.3	0.5
1980	41.1	66.3	46.0	18.0	7.7	2.2	0.4

[1]Rates computed by relating all first births to unmarried women, regardless of age of mother, to unmarried women aged 15–44 years.
[2]Rates computed by relating first births to unmarried women aged 40 years and over to unmarried women aged 40–44 years.
[3]Includes races other than white and black.

Table 12. Number of all live births and first births to unmarried mothers, by age of mother and race of child: United States, 1975, 1980, 1985, and 1986

Year, live-birth order, and race of child	Age of mother						
	All ages[1]	15–19 years	20–24 years	25–29 years	30–34 years	35–39 years	40 years and over
All births							
All races[2]:							
1986[3]	878,477	280,720	316,188	165,662	74,928	26,967	4,597
1985[3]	826,174	270,922	300,365	152,024	67,315	24,038	4,124
1980[3]	665,747	262,777	237,265	99,583	40,984	13,187	2,927
1975[4]	447,900	222,500	134,000	50,200	19,800	8,100	2,300
White:							
1986[3]	466,774	149,779	167,183	87,378	40,456	15,783	2,849
1985[3]	432,969	142,131	156,568	78,834	35,871	13,714	2,471
1980[3]	320,063	127,984	112,854	46,872	20,565	7,073	1,571
1975[4]	186,400	93,900	54,500	21,200	8,600	3,600	1,000
Black:							
1986[3]	380,261	122,195	138,070	71,951	30,967	9,810	1,451
1985[3]	365,527	120,378	133,360	67,300	28,305	9,027	1,374
1980[3]	325,737	128,022	117,423	49,077	18,766	5,513	1,229
1975[4]	249,600	123,800	75,600	27,100	10,500	4,200	1,200
First births							
All races[2]:							
1986[3]	453,448	221,562	149,834	48,052	18,178	5,880	822
1985[3]	431,548	213,953	142,594	43,985	16,230	5,041	684
1980[3]	370,718	209,129	113,769	28,112	8,778	2,011	331
1975[4]	272,200	181,500	63,900	12,400	3,000	800	200
White:							
1986[3]	264,923	126,159	89,449	29,355	11,930	4,178	592
1985[3]	248,514	119,894	84,189	26,563	10,641	3,468	486
1980[3]	200,686	110,199	63,901	16,569	5,426	1,303	222
1975[4]	128,600	83,500	32,500	6,900	1,800	500	100
Black:							
1986[3]	173,074	88,465	55,228	16,823	5,359	1,418	169
1985[3]	168,265	87,345	53,468	15,633	4,813	1,280	153
1980[3]	159,381	93,444	46,442	10,469	2,978	604	90
1975[4]	136,400	93,800	29,300	5,000	1,100	200	100

[1]Includes births to mothers under 15 years of age.
[2]Includes races other than white and black.
[3]Data for States in which marital status of mother was not reported have been inferred and included with data from the remaining States; see Appendix.
[4]Births to unmarried women are estimated for the United States from data for registration areas in which marital status of mother was reported; see Appendix. Due to rounding births to nearest hundred, figures by age may not add to total.

Table 13. Percent of all live births and first births with low birth weight, by age of mother and race of child: United States 1970, 1975, 1980, 1985, and 1986

[Low birth weight is defined as less than 2500 grams (5lb., 8 oz.) for 1980, 1985, and 1986 and 2,500 grams or less for 1970 and 1975]

Live-birth order and age of mother	All races[1]					White					Black				
	1986	1985	1980	1975	1970	1986	1985	1980	1975	1970	1986	1985	1980	1975	1970
All births															
All ages	6.8	6.8	6.8	7.4	7.9	5.6	5.6	5.7	6.3	6.8	12.5	12.4	12.5	13.1	13.9
Under 15 years	13.8	12.9	14.6	14.1	16.6	11.1	10.5	11.2	11.3	12.5	15.8	14.8	17.2	16.2	19.1
15–19 years	9.3	9.3	9.4	10.0	10.5	7.6	7.6	7.7	8.1	8.6	13.2	13.3	14.0	14.8	15.7
20–24 years	7.0	6.9	6.9	7.1	7.4	5.7	5.7	5.7	6.0	6.4	12.2	12.0	12.6	12.8	13.4
25–29 years	6.0	5.9	5.8	6.1	6.9	5.1	5.0	5.0	5.4	6.2	12.2	12.0	11.2	11.2	12.2
30–34 years	6.1	6.0	5.9	6.8	7.5	5.2	5.2	5.1	6.1	6.7	12.5	12.4	11.1	11.8	12.3
35–39 years	6.9	6.9	7.0	8.2	8.7	6.0	6.0	6.1	7.3	7.8	12.9	12.7	11.7	13.2	13.4
40 years and over	8.3	8.4	8.3	9.5	9.2	7.1	7.4	7.4	8.7	8.4	14.8	13.7	12.4	13.0	12.9
First births															
All ages	7.1	7.1	7.1	7.6	7.9	6.1	6.1	6.1	6.6	6.8	12.2	12.2	12.6	13.3	14.1
Under 15 years	13.4	12.5	14.2	13.8	16.4	10.7	10.0	10.8	11.2	12.5	15.4	14.5	16.8	15.8	18.7
15–19 years	8.6	8.6	8.7	9.2	9.5	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.7	8.0	12.2	12.4	13.0	13.7	14.5
20–24 years	6.5	6.4	6.4	6.6	6.7	5.5	5.5	5.5	5.8	6.0	11.5	11.3	12.0	12.4	12.9
25–29 years	6.1	6.2	6.2	6.4	7.0	5.5	5.5	5.7	5.9	6.5	12.0	12.2	11.8	12.3	13.1
30–34 years	7.3	7.4	7.3	8.1	8.6	6.6	6.8	6.7	7.5	8.0	14.2	14.6	13.5	14.3	15.2
35–39 years	8.8	8.9	9.5	10.3	11.7	8.1	8.1	8.5	9.3	10.8	16.3	15.5	16.4	18.1	19.0
40 years and over	10.1	11.1	9.7	12.6	12.9	9.0	10.4	9.2	11.4	12.3	15.9	18.4	16.6	21.8	14.5

[1] Includes races other than white and black.

Table 14. Percent of first births with low birth weight for women 20–39 years of age, by age and educational attainment of mother and race of child: 47 reporting States and the District of Columbia, 1986

[Low birth weight is defined as less than 2,500 grams (5 lb., 8 oz.)]

Age of mother and race of child	Years of school completed by mother					
	Total[1]	0–8 years	9–11 years	12 years	13–15 years	16 years or more
All races[2]						
All ages[3]	7.2	10.9	9.7	7.3	6.1	5.2
20–24 years	6.7	9.4	9.3	6.7	5.7	4.5
25–29 years	6.2	8.7	11.2	7.2	5.8	4.6
30–34 years	7.5	12.4	14.8	9.4	7.6	5.8
35–39 years	9.0	12.8	17.2	11.3	9.5	7.2
White						
All ages[3]	6.2	9.5	8.3	6.3	5.3	4.7
20–24 years	5.6	8.9	8.1	5.7	4.7	3.8
25–29 years	5.5	7.7	10.2	6.4	5.1	4.2
30–34 years	6.8	13.2	13.3	8.6	6.9	5.3
35–39 years	8.2	12.4	15.2	10.4	8.3	6.7
Black						
All ages[3]	12.4	14.6	13.3	12.4	10.8	10.1
20–24 years	11.6	13.1	14.9	12.0	10.1	8.4
25–29 years	12.2	13.1	16.7	14.2	10.8	9.3
30–34 years	14.6	11.9	21.4	16.3	14.4	12.0
35–39 years	16.5	17.2	22.9	17.6	19.6	13.0

[1] Includes educational attainment not stated.
[2] Includes races other than white and black.
[3] Includes births to mothers aged under 20 years and 40 years and older.

NOTE: Excludes data for California, Texas, and Washington, which did not require reporting of educational attainment of mother.

Table 15. Percent distribution of first births by month of pregnancy prenatal care began, according to age of mother and race of child: United States, 1986

Month of pregnancy prenatal care began and race of child	Age of mother						
	All ages[1]	15–19 years	20–24 years	25–29 years	30–34 years	35–39 years	40 years and over
All races[2]							
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1st–3d month	77.4	55.8	77.2	89.3	91.0	89.7	84.8
4th–6th month	17.4	33.6	17.9	8.4	7.1	7.8	10.4
7th–9th month	3.7	7.7	3.5	1.6	1.3	1.6	2.9
No prenatal care	1.5	2.9	1.4	0.7	0.6	0.9	1.8
White							
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1st–3d month	80.4	58.1	79.4	90.7	92.2	90.8	86.0
4th–6th month	15.3	31.9	16.2	7.4	6.2	7.0	9.8
7th–9th month	3.2	7.3	3.1	1.3	1.1	1.5	2.5
No prenatal care	1.2	2.7	1.2	0.5	0.5	0.7	1.7
Black							
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
1st–3d month	62.6	50.2	66.8	79.2	81.8	81.2	75.6
4th–6th month	28.2	37.7	25.5	15.5	13.2	13.9	14.4
7th–9th month	6.1	8.5	5.1	3.0	2.8	2.2	6.4
No prenatal care	3.0	3.7	2.6	2.2	2.2	2.7	3.6

[1]Includes births to mothers under 15 years of age.
[2]Includes races other than white and black.

Appendix
Technical notes

Sources of data

Data shown in this report for 1985 and 1986 are based on 100 percent of the birth certificates in all States and the District of Columbia. The data are provided to the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS) through the Vital Statistics Cooperative Program (VSCP). Data for 1972–84 are based on 100 percent of the birth certificates from States participating in the VSCP and on a 50-percent sample of births from all other States. The number of States providing data through the cooperative program increased from 6 in 1972 to 46 in 1984. Data for 1970–71 are based on a 50-percent sample of births for all States. More detailed information on sampling procedures for 1970–84 is presented in the annual reports for those years—*Vital Statistics of the United States,* Volume I, "Natality."

Birth probabilities

Birth probabilities and proportions of women who are childless are derived from a specially prepared set of fertility tables for birth cohorts that are adjusted for underregistration of births and underenumeration of the population (NCHS, 1976). Because the data necessary to prepare these fertility tables were not available for the black population separately, these data were prepared for the white population and for the population of all other races as a group. The trends in first-birth rates for black and all other women were roughly parallel during the 1970's with the rates for black women running about 25 percent lower than the rates for all women other than white combined. In recent years, the trends have differed and the proportion of the all other population that is black has declined. Data for birth probabilities, birth rates, and proportions childless shown in figures 1–4 are derived from the specially prepared tables; the birth rates shown in tables 2 and 4 in this report are the regularly published period fertility rates, which are available for black women separately.

Educational attainment

To compute birth rates by age and educational attainment of mother for this report, two procedures were followed. For 1970 and 1975, it was necessary to estimate first births by age and educational attainment of mother for the United States as a whole from data reported by the States that included information on educational attainment on their birth certificates. This was done by inflating the figures by educational attainment and age of mother for the reporting States to the known totals for each age group for the entire United States. Thus, for example, the distribution of births by educational attainment for mothers aged 20–24 years for the reporting States was applied to the United States total number of births to mothers aged 20–24 years to yield the estimated number of births by educational attainment for this age group. During the period 1970–75, the number of States reporting educational attainment increased from 38 (accounting for 67 percent of births in the United States) to 42 and the District of Columbia (accounting for 72 percent of total births).

For 1980 and 1985, special tabulations of the female population by age, race, and educational attainment were obtained from the U.S. Bureau of the Census for the total of 47 States and the District of Columbia that reported educational attainment on the birth certificate (excludes California, Texas, and Washington). The 1980 data are based on the 1980 census and were modified to be consistent with Office of Management and Budget categories of race. The modification procedures are discussed in detail in a U.S. Bureau of the Census (1982) report. The 1985 data are derived from the Current Population Survey conducted in June. (For information on fertility and educational attainment data obtained from this survey, see U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1986, 1987.)

Marital status

Beginning with 1980 data, national estimates of births to unmarried women are derived from two sources. For 41 States and the District of Columbia, marital status is reported directly on the birth certificate; for the remaining 9 States that lack such an item, marital status is inferred from a comparison of the child's and parents' surnames. This procedure represents a substantial departure from the method used prior to 1980 to prepare national estimates of births to unmarried women. The previous method assumed that the incidence of births to unmarried women in States with no direct question on marital status was the same as the incidence in reporting States in the same geographic division.

The current method represents an attempt to use related information on the birth certificate to improve the

quality of national data as well as to provide data for the individual nonreporting States. The method is based on a comparison of the child's surname, the mother's present and maiden surnames, and the father's surname. An evaluation of the new method and its continuing validity for California (the largest nonreporting State) has been published (NCHS, 1985).

Racial classification

The racial designation used in this report is that of the child, which is determined from the race of the parents as entered on the birth certificate. When the parents are of different races and one parent is white, the child is assigned the other parent's race. When the parents are of different races and neither parent is white, the child is assigned the father's race with one exception: If the mother is Hawaiian or part Hawaiian, the child is considered Hawaiian. When the race of one parent is missing on the certificate, the child is assigned the race of the other parent. When race is not reported for either parent, the child is assigned the race of the child on the immediately preceding record.

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